(a) whether it is a fact that insurance premium is charged monthly for "Tarang" hand-sets;

(b) if so, the amount of premium being charged and the types of facilities being provided to the subscribers as a result thereof;

(c) whether these facilities are available in other hand-sets too; and

(d) the details of insurance amount paid to the subscribers due to damage or loss of "Tarang" hand-sets in Chhattisgarh, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. The Customer has an option to pay insurance premium on monthly basis for "Tarang" handsets.

(b) A premium of Rs. 20/- per month is being charged from the customer and paid to the Insurance Company. Under this scheme, customer is not required to pay security deposit for the handset provided to him.

(c) The Insurance Scheme is available on fixed wireless terminal also.

(d) As the WLL handsets under the Insurance Scheme are owned by BSNL, no premium amount is payable to the subscribers due to damage or loss of "Tarang" handsets.

Mobile towers in Andhra Pradesh

2123. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mobile towers installed by the BSNL, so far, in Andhra Pradesh for Global Mobile System-based mobile services;

(b) what could be the range of the base stations;

(c) whether it is a fact that some of the towers have become defunct in the last six months;

(d) if so, the details of such towers; and

(e) the action taken to rectify them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sir,

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has installed 1163 towers so far in the State of Andhra Pradesh for Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) based Mobile Services.

(b) Range of a mobile base station depends on topography of the surrounding areas, vegetations clusters of buildings in the vicinity of the base station, height of the Antenna, output transmitted power and Antenna characteristic etc. Subject to these conditions, typically the range of a tower varies between 300m to 5 Kms.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of (c) above.

Launching of 3-G services

2124. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government are going to launch third generation (3-G) services which helps in high speed download of data and video clips on mobiles;

(b) whether this is in continuation of 2/2.5/2.75-G services like GPRS and EDGE;

(c) whether any consultations have been held in this connection with the stakeholders; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No time frame has been fixed for introduction of 3-G technology.

(b) The IMT-2000 3-G services and 2/2.5/2.75-G services like GPRS and EDGE operate in different frequency bands.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) had conducted a consultation process on this issue through its consultation paper on "spectrum related issues". Based on the comments received in the